



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10**

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 155
Seattle, WA 98101-3188

REGIONAL
ADMINISTRATOR'S
DIVISION

March 10, 2022

Shirley Schultz
Development Services
City of Tacoma
747 Market Street
Tacoma, Washington 98402

Dear Ms. Schultz:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the City of Tacoma's February 8, 2022, Public Notice of the permit application for the Bridge BNSF Warehouse Project (LU21-0125; EPA number 22-0016-SEPA) in Pierce County, WA in accordance with Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The proposed project includes developing a 150 acre-site with buildings, parking lots, and a road with sidewalks. Up to 113 acres of impervious surface will be created.

The project proposes to develop portions of the Commencement Bay/South Tacoma Channel Superfund Site, South Tacoma Field (Operable Unit 4). Contaminants located on the north end of the proposed project site have been capped as part of the Superfund Site remediation. The Superfund Site is subject to remediation requirements under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). As part of the cleanup, a consent decree approved by the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington obligates several CERCLA potentially responsible parties to implement, operate and maintain remedial activities at the Site. Under the Consent Decree, both EPA and Washington State Department of Ecology have authorities, including review and approval of work plans, for those activities which may impact the remedial activities at the Site.

Based on EPA review of the Public Notice, the proposed project impacts during construction activities will generate both temporary and permanent environmental impacts. EPA provides the attached recommendations and comments specific to the CERCLA remediation requirements associated with the Superfund Site. Additionally, EPA recommends that the Applicant coordinate with Remedial Project Manager for the Superfund Site, Piper Peterson, at (206) 553-4951 or peterston.piper@epa.gov as the project is developed and implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project permit application. If you have questions about EPA's comments, please contact Theo Mbabaliye of my staff at (206) 553-6322 or at mbabaliye.theogene@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Rebecca
Chu

Rebecca A. Chu, Chief
Policy and Environmental Review Branch

Digitally signed by
Rebecca Chu
Date: 2022.03.10
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**US EPA Comments on the Permit Application for the
Bridge BNSF Warehouse Project (LU21-0125)
Pierce County, WA**

Superfund Cleanup Activities in the Proposed Project Area

Cleanup actions were implemented by several CERCLA potentially responsible parties pursuant to a Consent Decree within the proposed project area. The cleanup actions did not remove all contaminated soils from the Site. The areas where contaminated soils remain on Site were capped to prevent future human exposure. As part of the Superfund remedial action, the capped areas are subject to future use restrictions which prohibit uses that may damage or impair the effectiveness of the caps in preventing exposure to the underlying contaminated soils. The use restrictions were included in an Environmental Protection Restrictive Covenant and Access Easement that was filed with the Pierce County Recorder's Office. EPA recommends that the environmental review documents identify the use restrictions and describe how they will be complied with throughout the proposed project.

The proposed project includes construction of more than one large building and pave or otherwise hardscape most of the proposed project area. The paved areas would be used to park trucks and trailers. Because of that, construction of the project will result in all contaminated soils located in the proposed project area being capped under the buildings and paved/hardscaped areas. Therefore, we recommend that the environmental review specify how the proposed project will be compatible with the implemented EPA cleanup actions and existing property use restrictions.

Additionally, EPA recommends that the following information be provided for the purposes of evaluating the environmental impacts of the proposed project to the Commencement Bay/South Tacoma Channel Superfund Site, South Tacoma Field (Operable Unit 4):

Provide the following documents to the EPA Superfund program for coordination on the proposed project with the Superfund remedial action:

- **A.11 Background.** The Conceptual Mitigation Plan, dated December 2021
- **B.1.h. Environmental – Earth.** The draft “temporary erosion and control plan”
- **3.d. Water runoff (including stormwater).** The TESC plans
- **4.c. Plants.** The wetland plans
- **5.b. Animals.** The Biological Evaluation prepared by Soundview Consultants, May 2021
- **3.c.2. Water runoff (including stormwater), third paragraph.** Plans identifying stormwater or dust suppression water management within the Superfund Site.

A.9. Background. Clarify if the Media Management Plan is the same as the Soils Management Plan approved by EPA's Superfund Program in September 2021 as part of the Superfund remedial work. See 3.c.2 below as well.

B.2.a. Environmental – Air. Clarify if there are PSAPCA requirements for dust control or dust suppression during construction activities and if the plans will be reviewed by PSAPCA as well.

B.2.c. Environmental – Air. The project has identified a “no visible dust” standard. The proposal states “As practicable, water spraying equipment will be used to minimize the potential for dust suppression.” Identify circumstances when or where water spraying equipment might not be able to be used for dust suppression, and what actions will be undertaken to mitigate dust in those instances.

3.a.1. Surface Water. A “Stream Z” is identified in this paragraph, however, there is not a stream named “Z” in the area. Likely the stream referred to is Fleet Creek. Verify and clarify in future submittals regarding this project.

3.a.2. Surface Water. Identify what a "bottomless crossing" along “Stream Z” is and where the creek is in relationship to the South Tacoma Field Superfund site and the future development activities. Note the creek is referred to as Fleet Creek at the end of this paragraph.

3.b.1 Groundwater. Identify the volume and location of the stormwater infiltration system(s) and the soil chemical characteristics in that area (e.g., are they below cleanup levels or are they clean). Identify the location of the modular wetland system and the components of such a system and its relationship to the existing wetlands on this property.

3.c.1 Water runoff (including stormwater). Clarify if the infiltration facilities described are the same or different from the infiltration system and/or modular wetland system identified above in 3.b.1. Provide the location of this infiltration facility(ies) and the “natural discharge point.”

3.c.2. Water runoff (including stormwater), first paragraph. Clarify that “some of the contaminated soils on the STF OU 4 (Commencement Bay/South Tacoma Channel -- CB/STC) Superfund site have been stabilized” Note: this references Operable Unit 4 of the Superfund Site. There are other soils, nearly 95,000 cy, that have been consolidated (but not treated) adjacent to the treated soils. Both contiguous soil areas are covered with 1-foot of soil. Include in this section a discussion of impacts to surface water during redevelopment activities and identify measures to take to mitigate impacts.

3.c.2. Water runoff (including stormwater), second paragraph. Be aware that where the development plan identifies excavation or placement of contaminated soil or water (i.e., rainwater, dust suppression, etc.) that is in contact with contaminated on-site soil, the applicant will need to coordinate with the EPA Superfund RPM and City on plans to implement such activities.

Refer to contaminated soils as such and not as “Waste.”

3.c.2. Water runoff (including stormwater), third paragraph. It is probable that rainwater and water generated during waste suppression activities will encounter contaminated on-site soil during excavation and transport of soils to vicinity of the two building foundations. These soils will need to be managed appropriately.

7.a. Environmental Health, first paragraph. This operable unit of CB/STC is a Superfund site. The soils on the South Tacoma Field OU4 are partially deleted from the National Priorities List, but Operation and Maintenance (O&M), institutional controls (ICs) and a Five-Year Review (FYR) are required in perpetuity for the remedy to remain protective. ICs and the O&M Plan shall be updated after development activities are constructed. EPA will conduct FYRs every 5 years; the next one will be completed by May 2023. The site is referred to as “CB/STC.”

7.a. Environmental Health, second paragraph. The Site Management Plan was approved by EPA’s Superfund program in September 2021. Please clarify what “final site closure” refers to. Please note that the Superfund remedy for STF OU4 requires ongoing review and evaluation for protectiveness in EPA’s FYR.

7.a.1. Environmental Health. The on-site soils that are treated and/or consolidated and covered with one foot of soil are referred to as a “cover” (not cap) in Superfund project documents.

7.a.1. Environmental Health, Groundwater. A groundwater attainment analysis has been conducted and approved by EPA Superfund program at the wells on the BNSF property; groundwater was determined to have met the cleanup levels in the ROD. Monitoring wells have been decommissioned in this area.

EPA Address. The address for EPA RPM is:

US Environmental Protection Agency R10
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